

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert the following new paragraph between the first full paragraph and the second paragraph on page 6 (line 29):

Furtner, a device region 126 of ESD protection structure 100 can be defined to extend from a first horizontal plane H1 to a second horizontal plane H2, and from a first vertical plane V1 to a second vertical plane V2. The first horizontal plane H1 lies on the top surface of semiconductor substrate 102, while the second horizontal plane H2 contacts the top surfaces of the first and second electrical contacts 122 and 124. In addition, the first vertical plane V1 contacts the top surface of semiconductor substrate 102 between region 110 and region 114, while the second vertical plane V2 contacts the top surface of semiconductor substrate 102 between region 112 and region 116.

As shown in FIG. 1, device region 126 overlies and contacts gap region 108, is totally free of a conductive material, such as the gate of a MOS transistor, and does not lie below a gate. Further, device region 126 can alternately be defined to have a smaller size, but always contacts the top surface of semiconductor substrate 102 and gap region 108.